

## **Malaysia Open To Bilateral Trade Arrangement With US As Opposed To Multilateral, Says Najib**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 8 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is open to bilateral trade arrangements with the United States (US) if the administration favours it as opposed to multilateral arrangements, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

Thus, Malaysia would begin preliminary discussions with the US on the matter and the time frame that it would entail.

Najib, who will be visiting the United States from Sept 12, is also expected to announce initiatives related to mutually beneficial partnership between both countries during his meeting with US President Donald Trump.

"There will be a four-eyed meeting beforehand and a formal bilateral meeting, and the next day i will meet President Trump.

"I will give my opinion piece but I hope the United States will treat Malaysia as a reliable partner in trade and investment, in security partnership and in combating terrorism," Najib told reporters when asked for details of his trip after chairing the BN Supreme Council meeting here today.

Najib hoped US companies would regard Malaysia as one of the best places to invest and that it would gain access to US high technology in order to move up the country's value chain and boost domestic economic development.

This would translate into more investment participation and transfer of technology from US companies.

"The United States is the second largest investor in accumulated basis and they are a significant player in Malaysia's economic growth.

"As a nation, we are also becoming an exporter of capital, so we can also play our part in terms of whatever opportunities there are in the US," he said.

Commenting on the Trans Pacific Partnership, he said the remaining 11 members, except for the US, would meet in Danang, Vietnam, and there was a possibility that member countries may agree to a multilateral arrangement within the group.

"But, the downside to this is the market size of the 11 economies is just 25 per cent of the original TPP (market size) because US accounts for 75 per cent of the combined Gross Domestic Product of the TPP countries."

Trump is expected to attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, scheduled to be held in Vietnam, beginning Nov 5, 2017.

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